

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1.) Claim Amendments

The Applicants have amended claims 9-13. Claims 15-17 have been canceled and rewritten as new claims 19-21 herein. Accordingly, claims 1-14 and 19-21 are pending in the application. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

2.) Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowance of claims 1-8 and 14.

3.) Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

On Page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 9-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In particular, the Examiner stated that claims 9-13 claim a system, but do not define a structure for the system, but rather recite an address mapping function.

The Applicant has amended claims 9-13 to recite an access node rather than a system. In addition, the phrase "address mapping function" has been deleted, and the claims have been written in means-plus-function format. Basis for the amendments is found in FIG. 7 and the corresponding text in paragraph [0029] of the specification. Therefore, the withdrawal of the § 112 rejection is respectfully requested.

4.) Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 101

On Page 2 of the Office Action, The Examiner rejected claims 9-13 and 15-17 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

The Applicant has amended claims 9-13 to recite an access node rather than a system. In addition, the phrase "address mapping function" has been deleted, and the claims have been written in means-plus-function format. In addition, elements have

been added to independent claims 9 and 10 to recite means for receiving an Ethernet frame and transmitting the Ethernet frame after replacing the original MAC address with the virtual MAC address. Thus, the access node is providing a tangible result. Basis for the amendments is found in FIG. 7 and the corresponding text in paragraph [0029] of the specification. Therefore, the allowance of amended claims 9 and 10 is respectfully requested.

Claims 11-13 depend from amended claim 10 and recite further limitations in combination with the novel elements of claim 10. Therefore, the allowance of claims 11-13 is respectfully requested.

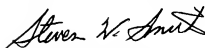
Claims 15-17 have been canceled and rewritten as new claims 19-21. The new claims recite a computer program loaded on an internal memory of a controller of an access node of a communications system, comprising software code portions for performing a series of steps when the computer program is run on a processor of the controller. The recited steps are the steps of allowed claim 1. The Applicant respectfully submits that in this claim format, claims 19-21 recite patentable subject matter. The allowance of claims 19-21 is respectfully requested.

5.) Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicants believe all of the claims currently pending in the Application to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance for claims 1-14 and 19-21.

The Applicants request a telephonic interview if the Examiner has any questions or requires any additional information that would further or expedite the prosecution of the Application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven W. Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "S" at the beginning.

Steven W. Smith
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